



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## 1301.6 - Tasmanian Year Book, 1998

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### Feature Article - Speed detection devices

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Speed has long been recognised as a major contributing factor in fatal and serious traffic accidents on Tasmanian roads. Between 1970 and 1996, 2430 people lost their lives on our roads.

When first introduced in March 1993, speed cameras showed the percentage of speeding motorists to be as high as 3%. For the first 4 months of 1997, this figure has reduced to less than 1%.

In its effort to further reduce the effects of road trauma and the percentage of speeding motorists, Tasmania Police has utilised a number of speed enforcement measuring devices including:

- 32 hand-held radar devices;
- 5 mobile radar devices; and
- 5 radar speed camera devices.

These devices are used by Tasmania Police throughout the State, including remote country Police Stations and the Police Traffic Branches.

To supplement these radar devices, Tasmania Police has also introduced laser speed measuring devices, both in hand-held and speed camera format.

The advantage of laser over radar is that these devices can be used in high traffic density areas where radars could not previously be used.

With a laser device, it is possible to accurately identify a speeding vehicle, even if it is surrounded by other vehicles. For example, a speeding vehicle can be detected during peak hour traffic on the Tasman Bridge, Hobart. The following laser speed measuring devices are now in use on Tasmanian roads:

- 17 hand-held laser devices;
- 7 laser speed camera devices; and
- 2 fixed-site laser speed camera devices.

Laser speed cameras also provide new technology regarding the recording/storage of infringements. Radar speed cameras record images to a 35 mm photographic film, whereas the laser speed cameras record infringements directly, in a digitised format, to a computer disk. This

system provides maximum security, ease of processing, and image retrieval.

Laser speed cameras have also provided the options of being able to be used in a manned, un-manned or at a fixed site location. The un-manned and fixed site operations enable extended operational hours without impacting on personnel numbers. A fixed-site laser camera can operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with the only operator involvement being the initial set-up and eventual image retrieval.

Speed measuring devices have proven themselves to be an effective tool in the reduction of the number of accidents and speeding motorists.

### **PERSONS KILLED ON TASMANIAN ROADS**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Persons killed no.</b>
1970	118
1975	122
1980	100
1985	78
1990	71
1995	56
1996	64

Source: Department of Police and Public Safety

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